

CROXLEY COMMUNITY NEWS

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION.

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SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER 1949.

Editorial

A feature of this publication, which we have always endeavoured to preserve, is that the contributions emanate from as wide a circle of our members as possible—that it shall be not an officially inspired pamphlet but a medium for the expression of views by residents to residents.

It follows, therefore, that some of the views so expressed are not necessarily those held by the editorial staff, but, if considered of sufficient general interest and conforming to the elementary rules we are bound to impose, space will always be found for members' letters, articles, or other contributions.

It will be observed that one of the articles in this issue takes us outside our local sphere—probably a good thing to happen to us occasionally. We have in the past been accused of adopting a purely parochial attitude; whilst it is only too easy to merit such an accusation we do try to widen our vision and view our own affairs as a part of the broader picture. We hope to have some more articles of this nature from the same source.

We rather expect, too, that we shall have more in the future to offer our friends in the South Ward. Our Chairman, Mr. H. W. R. Fowler, spent some fifteen years in that side of Croxley Green and our Vice-Chairman, Mr. A. T. Thomson, is resident in Frankland Road. There is much in this Association to interest our South Ward members and we hope to keep them informed.

In conclusion, we are reminded that members' subscriptions are now due; those who are able would greatly assist their Street Steward if they would call to pay in their subscription on some convenient occasion.

Shops

After such a long delay, it is gratifying to learn the views of the Divisional Planning Officer on sites for shops in the North side of Croxley Green. In view of the present and future distribution of population in the area, he feels the public would be best served by a block of shops at the top of Baldwins Lane and another at the bottom, on the corner of Winton Drive. He adds that the Ports Land site, which has been pressed for in some quarters, would be unsuitable for the purpose.

A referendum taken of members of this Association during the earlier part of its campaign for shops also confirmed this latter opinion, the preference then being in favour of the site just under the Railway Bridge. Whilst we feel that the position at the top of Baldwins Lane is ideal in every respect, we do wonder, whether, in the cause of Road Safety, it would be better not to have shops in the dangerous position at the bottom of Winton Drive when there is a safe site available just a few yards further down the road which also lends itself for further development. The main point to consider, however, is SHOPS—and soon.

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Food for Thought

Few will have missed the reports on the deliberations at the first session of the Assembly of Europe, an event which may well have far-reaching effects, not only on the future of Europe as a whole, but on the future of this country in particular.

Britain, because of its peculiar constitutional relations with the Dominions, will have many points to consider before entering into a partnership which may have the effect of changing what we have always been proud to refer to as the "British way of life," and the British brand of Democracy.

It may well be that in the future we may find ourselves governed from Strasbourg, and, whether we as individuals like the idea or not, we must take stock and study the effect such a change would have on our lives as individuals in order that we may play our part to the full.

So long as we keep uppermost in our minds that we intend to uphold the true conception of Democracy—government and legislation designed for the good of the community as a whole—and by our actions ensure that such only will be accepted, then we need have no fear.

What we have to oppose to the limit, irrespective of whether directed from Strasbourg or London, is dictatorial government by decree, designed for the benefit of a few at the expense of the many.

Do not let us be blind to what is already happening in other parts of the world, where the many are forced to serve the few political theorists. It will be too late to decide when the gate closes, therefore all the more reason why we should think and be on the alert now.

Whilst these words of warning may be thought premature, as no firm decisions affecting our sovereignty are likely to be taken for a considerable time to come, there are already signs that politics and philosophies have entered into the deliberations to an alarming degree.

Surely on such an occasion we could quite rightly have expected the fullest harmony amongst the British delegates, but again we are disappointed. Perhaps it has become the habit of our professional politicians to overlook the

needs of the people so long as their particular ideologies are being furthered.

What must the delegates of the other European countries have thought when the British team could not agree? "Strange bedfellows," no doubt having in mind that when a family go visiting they usually show themselves as a harmonious family, or at least give that impression—even though the much-maligned mother-in-law accompanied them!

Leaving general and national affairs for a moment let us see how this all affects us in the backwoods of Croxley Green. Remembering that a council chamber is just another Strasbourg on a very small scale we thus see the parallel.

There we see political puppets apeing the actions of their leaders, ceasing to be individuals with a conscience of their own, but speaking and working as directed, truly qualifying for the coveted badge of honour—"His Master's Voice."

When we see this happening can we be blamed for being apprehensive for the future, having always in mind that "little fleas have bigger fleas and so ad infinitum."

There may be much we can do if we think, and when we find it advantageous to do so, act with decision.

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Resignation of Vice-President

The Association will lose an enthusiastic worker and well-known personality in Mr. L. G. Young, who is leaving the district on his retirement. A founder-member since the Association was formed in the autumn of 1938, Mr. Young has displayed the utmost interest in all things relating to Croxley Green, and his services to the Association were recognised at the last annual general meeting, when he was elected Vice-President.

In addition to his work for the Residents' Association, he has also taken an active part in the Croxley Green Society ever since its formation and, together with Mrs. Young, has been especially interested in all matters connected with education in the district, being a member of the Further Education Committee.

We extend to both Mr. and Mrs. Young our hearty wishes for good health and happiness in their well-earned retirement at Clacton, which is to be their future home. We understand that Mr. Young has already joined the Residents' Association there, having for some time past had a foot in either camp.

New Chairman for Association

Following the resignation from the Chairmanship of this Association by Mr. R. King-Jones, as reported in our last issue, his place has been filled by Mr. H. W. R. Fowler, 140 Baldwins Lane, who has held the office of Vice-Chairman since the last annual general meeting. Mr. Fowler, who has been resident in Croxley Green for the past thirty years apart from the war period, has been actively engaged in the Association's affairs since he undertook the duties of General Secretary in January, 1947.

Mr. A. T. Thomson, 93 Franklin Road, who has displayed a keen interest in the fortunes of the South Ward, succeeds Mr. Fowler as Vice-Chairman.

Mr. King-Jones is now a member of the Committee as is also Mr. F. H. Gurney, who, after four and a half years as a Councillor, will be able to make a valuable contribution to the work of the Association.

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WE HEAR . . .

The 500th Council house was recently allocated to a family of 11. The key was handed to the new occupant by Sir John Wrigley, Deputy Secretary to the Ministry of Health.

A proposal that typewriters and duplicators be provided for the new Primary Schools throughout the county was not agreed at the meeting of the S.W. Herts Primary School Committee. The estimated cost was given as £6,000—£7,000. It is now being left to headmasters to state their cases individually when they will be considered on their merits.

Plans for putting into effect new Civil Defence service are now being formulated. Insofar as this area is concerned, the County Authorities are scheduled as the "Scheme making authority." The County has two qualified instructors available for conducting refresher courses.

The new Crown Post Office near the Met. Station is at last in being. Opening hours are 8.30 a.m. till 6 p.m. on all days except Sundays and Public Holidays.

Following the Government's decision some time ago to halt the work of the Local Government Boundaries Commission, the Boundaries question is again receiving attention. This Association intends to follow the matter fully and keep members informed of developments.

CHAIRMAN

At this time of the year it is difficult to take me to divert from our own purely personal affairs. Most holidays and with the glorious summer weather we let our thoughts wander to the countryside or the b

Again, moving around Croxley, it is apparent in literal sense, in putting our own houses in order. to have emerged with the fine weather and soon of bricks and woodwork, even if the floral exhibit

Our open spaces have not been altogether new good substantial seats on which we can sit as we w be when subjected to the efforts of our local planner

These same planners seem slow in approaching many suggestions—not all of them proved to be in safety, 'bus services, and the like, are still very m if due consideration is being given to our own pa

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It may be said that as supporters of this Association are. All the same it is only reasonable to urge you what you think—see how your elected representatives more fairly how to vote at the next local election.

'S LETTER

more than a fleeting interest in anything which tends to the improvement of the district. We are having, or have just finished, our annual meeting. As we have enjoyed of late, there is every incentive to attend each.

It is a pity that a great many of us are engaged, in a very busy way. A profusion of ladders, brushes and paint-pots seem to be everywhere. We should have a "Brighter Croxley" composed of those who are not too successful.

neglected. On the Green we now have a number of people who wonder what the appearance of the Green itself will be in the future.

Meeting the needs of this particular district. Despite the fact that it is impracticable—the vexing questions of shops, road works and such in the air. We may be excused for wondering about these particular problems.

For residents to go and see for themselves. Arrange for a meeting of the full Council to be held in the Bury Restaurant or in the Council Chamber itself; the reason is to allow a number of people to attend the proceedings.

It is a pity and it provides an opportunity which we strongly recommend to visit on the last Tuesday evening of the month. It is a pity whether or not the intrusion of party politics into our district.

It is a pity that the Party candidates, supported Party candidates, can judge for themselves against the various political partisans—already committed to aid the efficient and expeditious handling of the district.

It is a pity that we are prejudiced in this matter. Maybe we should accept the invitation of the Council and see for ourselves how they show up in your view—so that you can decide for yourself.

H. W. R. FOWLER.

. . . AND OBSERVE

We understand that the W.V.S. will be reopening the Clothing Exchange at Rickmansworth on 13th September.

The Chairman of the West Herts Group Hospital Committee has suggested that public meetings should be held where the committees may give an account of their stewardship to the general public.

The Oxhey Estate Community Association has arranged an ambitious programme for which the use of the new Estate school has been obtained for two nights each week, and three Saturdays each month.

Rose hips are again being called for by the W.V.S. at Rickmansworth. It is understood that payment is made at the rate of threepence per lb. and that anyone collecting a quantity of over ten lbs. qualifies for a special W.V.S. badge.

Residents and householders at the lower end of Harvey Road merit some sympathy. For several years the bottom of this road has been regarded as a communal dumping ground for rubbish of every description, most of which should have been either burned or placed in the dust-bin. Even newspapers and magazines called for as salvage are left there and soon litter the road in the vicinity. This is no case for the Council, but is entirely up to the residents themselves to dispose of their refuse in a proper manner and not place it where it becomes an eyesore and menace to public health. Will those responsible kindly note.

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

At this time of the year it is difficult to take more than a fleeting interest in anything which tends to divert from our own purely personal affairs. Most of us are having, or have just finished, our annual holidays and with the glorious summer weather we have enjoyed of late, there is every incentive to let our thoughts wander to the countryside or the beach.

Again, moving around Croxley, it is apparent that a great many of us are engaged, in a very literal sense, in putting our own houses in order. A profusion of ladders, brushes and paint-pots seem to have emerged with the fine weather and soon we should have a "Brighter Croxley" composed of bricks and woodwork, even if the floral exhibits are not too successful.

Our open spaces have not been altogether neglected. On the Green we now have a number of good substantial seats on which we can sit as we wonder what the appearance of the Green itself will be when subjected to the efforts of our local planners.

These same planners seem slow in approaching the needs of this particular district. Despite many suggestions—not all of them proved to be impracticable—the vexing questions of shops, road safety, 'bus services, and the like, are still very much in the air. We may be excused for wondering if due consideration is being given to our own particular problems.

There is now, however, a greater opportunity for residents to go and see for themselves. Arrangements have been made for the monthly meeting of the full Council to be held in the Bury Restaurant instead of the more restricted space provided in the Council Chamber itself; the reason is to allow a greater number of interested members of the public to attend the proceedings.

This is certainly a move in the right direction and it provides an opportunity which we strongly recommend to all residents. Pay the Council a visit on the last Tuesday evening of the month. It will at least supply proof, if any were needed, whether or not the intrusion of party politics into our local Council is likely to have a good or bad effect.

Those who, against the advice of this Association, supported Party candidates, can judge for themselves whether they consider the bickering amongst the various political partisans—already commented upon at length in the local Press—is calculated to aid the efficient and expeditious handling of our local affairs.

It may be said that as supporters of this Association, we are prejudiced in this matter. Maybe we are. All the same it is only reasonable to urge you to accept the invitation of the Council and see what **you** think—see how your elected representatives show up in **your** view—so that you can decide more fairly how to vote at the next local election.

H. W. R. FOWLER.

Where We Came In

We were going through an accumulation of odds and ends the other day, chiefly old letters, booklets, pamphlets and suchlike, and were amazed how the relative value of the various items had changed through the passage of time. Some, which had been put carefully away as being of especial value, had lost completely that significance which has caused them to be preserved, whilst others, probably retained by pure chance, now compelled an interest much greater than at the time they were prepared. What was a matter of everyday occurrence in the far-off days when they were printed or written could now be viewed from an entirely different angle in the light of subsequent events.

Among this category was a copy of the first issue of the "Croxley Argus," the original "Official Organ of the Croxley Residents' Association," which was printed and published in April, 1939, price 2d. (quarterly), free to members. At first glance it provides a striking contrast to the present austerity publication which you are now reading, with its green cover and twenty pages of inset. What particularly impresses the present editorial personnel is the obvious ease with which its pages were filled and the cost recovered as no less than ten pages are devoted to advertisements by local tradesmen. Many of these are illustrated with attractive half-tones and drawings reminding us of the keenness of competition and how cheap were materials and labour in those pre-war days—may we say, in these later days, too cheap.

But what chiefly engaged our attention were the details of the Association's activities in those early days of its existence. It was most interesting to observe, however, that several matters for which

"early" attention was then being solicited are still outstanding. Some, in fact, are being pressed for by the Association at the time this goes to print. The principal items appearing in the No. 1 copy of the "Argus" read as follows:—

Following an appeal for volunteers for A.R.P. duties (one item, at least, we hope is forever finished), and a most interesting article on Croxley Green by the Association's first President, the late Colonel Woolrych, we read of the campaign for

Softer Water.—It was through this campaign that the Association came into being but no satisfaction could ever be obtained. It is interesting to note that the Council has again raised the matter and hopes for results. We shall see.

Fire Alarms.—In 1939 it was apparently considered "that the advantage of installing alarms would not outweigh the considerable expense involved." The more modern view is that alarms are superfluous as any telephone can be used for the purpose.

Gas Charges.—The case then being made was that the abnormal growth of Croxley Green in the five years prior to 1939 called for a re-assessment of charges for gas supplies. We still feel that the "abnormal growth of Croxley Green" receives insufficient consideration in the eyes of our Local Government.

Proposed New Road from Malvern Way to Winton Crescent.—We underline this item. It shows how long we have been pressing for this means of easy access to the Met. Station from the Baldwins Lane area. Exactly the same arguments were put forward then as apply to-day.

Unfinished Roads.—The Association was then asking for action in respect of Malvern Way, Girton Way, Winton Drive and Winton Approach. The worst of these are now finished, but much still remains to be done in Winton Way—still being tackled by this Association.

Baldwins Lane Footpaths—Completed as result of applications.

Improved Bus Routes.—Steps were being taken 10 years ago to improve the service and introduce new routes: the same obstacles still appear.

Yes, the old "Croxley Argus" has certainly an interest of its own in the light of today's conditions; not the least is its proof that the Croxley Green Residents' Association has been working for Croxley for a very long time and that, whilst its efforts have been to some extent foiled by the war and post-war difficulties, the task of making this district a more attractive and pleasant place to live is still being carried on.

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Any more for the Salmon Tin?

In spite of strong protests, it appears that the London Transport Executive has decided that the Metropolitan line serving Watford and Rickmansworth would be better served by substituting open type rolling stock for the existing closed compartment type. No doubt this is intended to be in the best interests of the public at large, but it is felt that closer attention to the wishes of the people using this line would have resulted in some other decision.

From the point of view of the daily traveller it means that only half of those who at present ride seated will continue to do so, the remainder will have what can at best be described as a comfortable stand—as compared with standing in the present type of compartment coach. In addition, they will all share a certain discomfort through the oven-like properties of the open compartment in the summer, with less adequate ventilation.

An analysis of the seating of the two types reveals the following facts. The existing type of carriage has nine compartments, each seating five aside with comfort or six aside during rush hours—total seated per carriage—108. In addition there is standing room for some six persons to each compartment; not very comfortable, it is true, but owing to the large seating capacity, it is seldom necessary to stand very long. Allowing a standing capacity of 54, this gives us a total of 162 persons per coach. A point to note is that there is a door provided for every 18 persons in the coach, and it is only fair to mention that the old-style "First class" coaches, a few of which are in use, have only seven compartments with a proportionately smaller number of passengers.

On the other hand, the "Salmon Tin" as the open type of carriage is affectionately (?) called by the users of the Uxbridge line has a seating capacity of only 45. It was learnt from an official that this type was designed to carry 100 persons standing, giving a total carrying capacity of 145—as against the 162 detailed above for the existing carriage. There are two sets of sliding doors per coach, double doors certainly, but this does not discourage the first persons entering the coach from standing in the doorway, so narrowing the entrance very considerably. There may also be good points but, judging from the number of people who travel to Harrow-on-the-Hill on the Watford train, and then change reluctantly to wait for the train to Uxbridge, these must be very few.

It is obvious that, if the open type of carriage is brought into use, many passengers using intermediate stations will never get a seat. In any case, all will be effected to some degree—you, too, if you are a regular traveller. Why not

add your views to the many expressed by writing to—

G. Dodson-Wells, Esq.,
Chief Public Relations Officer,
London Transport Executive,
55 Broadway,

and urge that passengers be given an opportunity of making known the majority view by ballot or some other form of voting. Our present carriages may be old, but to replace them with a type which may be newer but lacking comfort and convenience, seems to be a move from bad to worse.

Weeds in School Grounds

Only a few short weeks ago a great deal of fuss and commotion attended the opening of the new Malvern Way school, and there was some competition at the time as to who should take the credit for this achievement.

Since then, unfortunately, interest has waned or been diverted into other channels and our new school has lost the immaculate appearance it acquired for the benefit of the V.I.P. who performed the opening ceremony. In place of the neat and tidy expanse of ground surrounding the building, which was one of its most attractive features, there is at the time this is being written a forest of weeds which threaten to engulf the school itself.

We fully appreciate the difficulty and expense of providing the necessary labour, but in fairness to all concerned—the pupils, the staff, and, not least, the ratepayers—some action should be taken by the responsible authority to keep this ground in better condition. The Residents' Association has already made application for early attention to the matter.

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DELIVERIES DAILY

Missed Opportunity?

Comment has been frequently made this summer on the several (and somewhat mysterious) lorry loads of rubbish and waste material dumped in the "Dip" at the rear of Frankland Road. The "dumping" is evidently haphazard and, needless to say, does not improve appearances and one has wondered whether or not the Council are aware of it.

This area is, and always has been, a vexed question to the residents of the South Ward; and indeed to citizens beyond the South Ward boundaries, for many who do not live in the vicinity frequently stroll this way. But there are many residing in the immediate neighbourhood who feel that the "Dip" is an example of "missed opportunity." It had a natural beauty of its own in the way that semi-woodland often has, and required no great skilled attention. Although due allowance must be made for the pressure of war years, it cannot be denied that a small amount of thought and foresight on the part of authority might have developed the area into quite an attractive spot. Rising costs and rates may have been a deterrent, but no skilled gardeners or expensive flower-bed laying were even required. One cannot help but wonder that had a little anticipatory planning been made, the area could have been developed into a fine amenity instead of deteriorating into its present forlorn state with its air of a rubbish dump. There may have been differences of opinion in the method of preservation, but there is all round agreement in condemnation of the waste of a natural amenity. There are few Urban Districts with such a natural and potential site, and its value is enhanced when the woods in the immediate vicinity are considered, but alas—there seems deplorably little evidence of civic pride in either.

Correspondence

Frankland Road,
Croxley Green.

Dear Sir,

I was somewhat interested to learn from a recent local political party publication that the opening of the new Post Office near the Croxley Met. Station was primarily due to their efforts. In common with others I was under the impression that the G.P.O. was obliged to find new alternative premises and even advertised for them. I wonder if the G.P.O. is aware of the support they received in their quest.

Yours faithfully,
"ENQUIRER."

Editorial Note: Not being in possession of the full details, we can only publish the above without comment.

Social Events

The Social Committee has again arranged an attractive programme for the coming season. Full details will be published in the next issue but in the meantime will members please note the following dates:—

Saturday, October 1st. Old Time Dance at Dickinson's Guildhouse with Andre Simone's Dance Band.

Saturday, November 26th. Old Time Dance at All Saints' Hall with Andre Simone's Dance Band.

Both old and new friends are warmly invited to attend.

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2576

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